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REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims 1-20 are pending in this application. The Examiner has withdrawn claims 9-12 and 19 from consideration. By this Amendment, Applicant AMENDS claims 1, 6, 11 and 18.

Applicant respectfully requests that the Examiner rejoin and allow non-elected claims 9-12 and 19 upon allowance of generic claim 1.

Claim 18 was objected to for containing a minor informality. Applicant has amended claim 18 to correct the minor informality noted by the Examiner. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and withdrawal of this objection.

Claims 1, 2 and 20 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being clearly anticipated by Yamamoto et al. (U.S. 5,900,789). Claims 14 and 15 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Yamamoto et al. Claims 3-8 and 18 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Tokudera et al. (U.S. 6,060,958) in view of Yamamoto et al. Claim 13 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Yamamoto et al. in view of Prevot et al. (U.S. 4,749,965). Claim 16 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Yamamoto et al. in view of Matsch (Electromagnetic and Electromechanical Machines). Claim 17 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Yamamoto et al. in view of Nakata et al. (U.S. 6,278,666). Applicant respectfully traverses the rejections of claims 1-8, 13-18, and 20.

Claim 1 has been amended to recite:

"A nonreciprocal circuit device comprising:
a permanent magnet;
a ferrite element to which a DC magnetic flux is applied by said permanent magnet;
a plurality of center electrodes provided on said ferrite element; and
a metal casing including a base material which is made of an iron-based metal and which accommodates said permanent magnet, said ferrite element, and said center electrodes,
wherein said metal casing comprises a first casing member and a second casing member, the first casing member and said permanent

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magnet are in magnetic contact with each other, and the base material of the second casing member has a thickness greater than 50% and substantially less than 100% of a thickness of the base material of the first casing member.” (emphasis added)

Applicant's claim 1 recites the features of “a metal casing including a base material which is made of an iron-based metal and which accommodates said permanent magnet, said ferrite element, and said center electrodes” and “the base material of the second casing member has a thickness greater than 50% and substantially less than 100% of a thickness of the base material of the first casing member.” Applicant's claims 6 and 11 recite features which are similar to features recited in Applicant's claim 1, including the above-emphasized features. With the improved features of claims 1, 6 and 11, Applicant has been able to provide a nonreciprocal circuit device that is reduced in size and particularly in height, while achieving outstanding frequency characteristics (see, for example, the second full paragraph on page 2 and the paragraph bridging pages 3 and 4 of the originally filed Specification).

The Examiner alleged that Yamamoto et al. teaches a nonreciprocal circuit device including a iron based yoke casing, “the base metal of the yoke is between 120 and 240 micrometers; the upper casing member is coated so as to be thicker than a coating on the lower casing member (e.g. see Col. 5, lines 61-67 and Col. 6, lines 25-32), and the thickness of the lower casing is greater than 50% and which can be considered substantially less than 100% of the thickness amount of the upper casing...”

Applicant has amended claims 1, 6 and 11, to recite the features of “a metal casing including a base material which is made of an iron-based metal and which accommodates said permanent magnet, said ferrite element, and said center electrodes” and “the base material of the second casing member has a thickness greater than 50% and substantially less than 100% of a thickness of the base material of the first casing member.”

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As acknowledged by the Examiner, Yamamoto et al. specifically teaches that the base metal of the entire yoke/metal, including the upper portion 1 and the lower portion 2, has the same thickness (between 120 and 240 μm), NOT different thicknesses, and that the difference in the thicknesses of the upper and lower portions is produced only by the thicknesses of the coating or plating on the upper and lower portions 1 and 2.

Thus, Yamamoto et al. clearly fails to teach or suggest the features of "a metal casing including a base material which is made of an iron-based metal and which accommodates said permanent magnet, said ferrite element, and said center electrodes" and "the base material of the second casing member has a thickness greater than 50% and substantially less than 100% of a thickness of the base material of the first casing member" as recited in Applicant's claims 1, 6 and 11.

The Examiner has relied upon Tokudera et al., Prevot et al., Matsch and Nakata et al. to allegedly cure various deficiencies in Yamamoto et al. However, none of Tokudera et al., Prevot et al., Matsch and Nakata et al. teaches or suggests the features of "a metal casing including a base material which is made of an iron-based metal and which accommodates said permanent magnet, said ferrite element, and said center electrodes" and "the base material of the second casing member has a thickness greater than 50% and substantially less than 100% of a thickness of the base material of the first casing member" as recited in Applicant's claims 1, 6 and 11.

Accordingly, Applicant respectfully submits that none of the prior art of record, applied alone or in combination, teaches or suggests the unique combination and arrangement of elements recited in claims 1, 6 and 11 of the present application. Claims 2-5, 7, 8, 13-18, and 20 depend upon claims 1 and 6, and are therefore allowable for at least the reasons that claims 1 and 6 are allowable. As noted above, Applicant respectfully requests that the Examiner rejoin and allow non-elected claims 9-12 and 19 upon allowance of generic claim 1.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicant respectfully submits

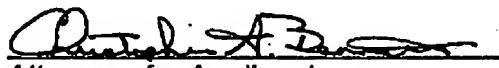
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that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable consideration and prompt allowance are solicited.

The Commissioner is authorized to charge any shortage in fees due in connection with the filing of this paper, including extension of time fees, to Deposit Account No. 50-1353.

Respectfully submitted,

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